

REMARKS

Claim 23 has been amended. Claims 43-48 have been canceled. No new matter has been introduced. The application now contains claims 13-19, 21, 23, 41 and 42. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the original claims and other claims in this application and in other applications.

Claim 23 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101. The rejection is respectfully traversed. Claim 23 has been amended pursuant to the recommendations provided by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 13-19, 21, 23, 41 and 42 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Linden et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,266,649) ("Linden") in view of Guheen et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,519,571) ("Guheen"), and in further view of Hosken (U.S. Patent No. 6,438,579). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 13 recites an item recommending system for recommending a related item at the time of purchasing a purchase item. The system comprises "a client database which stores at least client information representing attribution of clients including personal users and corporation users, possessed item information representing items possessed by each of the clients, and recommendable item information representing items to be recommended to each of the clients." In addition, the system also comprises "a client specifier which specifies a client concern based on the client information." Applicants respectfully submit that the cited combination fails to disclose, teach or suggest the claimed invention.

As acknowledged by the Office Action, Linden fails to disclose, teach or suggest "a client database which stores at least client information representing

attribution of clients including personal users and corporation users, possessed item information representing items possessed by each of the clients, and recommendable item information representing items to be recommended to each of the clients.” Linden merely discloses purchases by personal users.

The Office Action seeks to overcome this deficiency by combining Linden with Guheen and Hosken. However, Guheen and Hosken also fail to teach or suggest such limitations. For example, Guheen is cited as teaching client information representing attribution of clients including personal users and corporation users and a client specifier. (Office Action at 7). Hosken is cited for teaching a client database which stores recommendable item information representing items to be recommended to each of the clients. (Office Action at 8).

Applicants respectfully submit, however, that Guheen is not relevant to, does not teach, and does not overcome the deficiencies of Linden. Guheen relates to a user identifying system utilizing a user profile to customize an interface. Guheen does not teach or suggest an item recommending system comprising “a client database which stores at least client information representing attribution of clients;” the Office Action provides no explanation to the contrary.

As stated in Applicants’ previous response, the claimed invention features safer online shopping for corporation users. The claimed invention accepts both personal users and corporation users. The claimed system requires the corporation users to register a corporation ID and personal ID of people in charge (for example, persons in the general affairs department or purchase department). The personal ID is assigned to each of the persons in charge, including an individual password, and is associated with the corporation ID assigned to a business entity to which those persons belong. The system requires the corporation users to enter both the corporation ID and

his/her personal ID to log in. This prevents illegal access and/or purchases by others. Furthermore, the claimed invention provides an online shopping site having various routes by which a user find desired items.

Guheen simply discloses providing a user interface with multiple user indicia for the purpose of customizing a user interface. Guheen does not teach or suggest a database for storing client information representing attribution of clients. Nor would it have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to combine Guheen with Linden to achieve the claimed invention.

Moreover, even assuming the Office Action's statement regarding Hosken to be true, Hosken fails to cure the deficiencies of Linden and Guheen. That is, Hosken also fails to teach or suggest "a client database which stores at least client information representing attribution of clients including personal users and corporation users, possessed item information representing items possessed by each of the clients, and recommendable item information representing items to be recommended to each of the clients." Accordingly, claim 13 is allowable over Linden, Guheen and Hosken.

Claims 15-19, 41 and 42 depend from claim 13 and are allowable along with claim 13.

Claim 21 recites an item recommending method via a computer network. The method comprises the steps of "defining relationship information in a database, representing relationship among a plurality of items; storing client information representing at least attribution of clients including personal users and corporation users, items possessed by each of the clients, and recommendable items to be recommended to each of the clients; accepting access via the computer network by a client, and specifying the client based on the client information; specifying items

possessed by the specified client based on the client information; determining, based on said relationship information, items related to the specified possessed items; and offering the determined related items to said specified client via the computer network.”

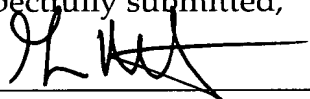
Claim 23 recites a computer program stored in a computer readable storage medium having computer executable instructions that when executed cause a computer to perform the steps of “specifying a client concern based on client information representing at least attribution of each client and items possessed by each client stored in a client database; specifying items possessed by the specified client based on the client information in said client database; specifying items relating to the specified items possessed by the specified client based on related item information representing relationship among a plurality of items stored in a related item database, preparing information representing at least the specified related items; and outputting the prepared information for recommending the purchase of the related item to the client.”

For at least the reasons set forth above with respect to claim 13, claims 21 and 23 are allowable over the cited combination. Accordingly, the rejection should be withdrawn and the claims allowed.

In view of the above amendment, Applicants believe the pending application is in condition for allowance.

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Respectfully submitted,

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